



HB 604

Establishing funding for trail maintenance and education

SENATE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

EXHIBIT NO. 2

DATE: 4-7-2015

BILL NO. HB 604

WHY TRAILS ARE GOOD FOR MONTANA

PUBLIC HEALTH

- 60% of Montanans are overweight or obese (*MT Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*)
- For every \$1 spent on building walking and biking paths in Montana, we could save close to \$3 in medical expenses (*MT Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*)

ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Bicycle tourists contribute an estimated \$377 Million to Montana's economy (*Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research*)
- Trails are the most desired community amenity that homeowners seek when buying a home (*National Association of Home Builders, 2008*)

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Dedicated bicycle and pedestrian paths help children get to and from school safely and help reduce childhood traffic fatalities
- Reduces conflicts and crashes with motor vehicles

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Walking is the most popular recreation activity in Montana (*MT Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*)
- 75% of Montanans use paths and trails for hiking, walking, jogging, and bicycling (*MT Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*)

KEY FEATURES OF HB 604

- Establishes funding for trail maintenance and bicycle/pedestrian education
- MDT compiles an inventory of shared use trails and develops a maintenance plan for shared use trails
- MDT conducts a public forum annually regarding shared-use trails

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- Currently there is NO funding for trails maintenance or education
- Trails are reaching a state of disrepair
- Trail maintenance costs between \$3,000 and \$7,000 per mile per year
- Trails benefit the economy, environment, and health
- Regular maintenance extends the life of trails
- Construction of new trails may stop if there is not a means to maintain them

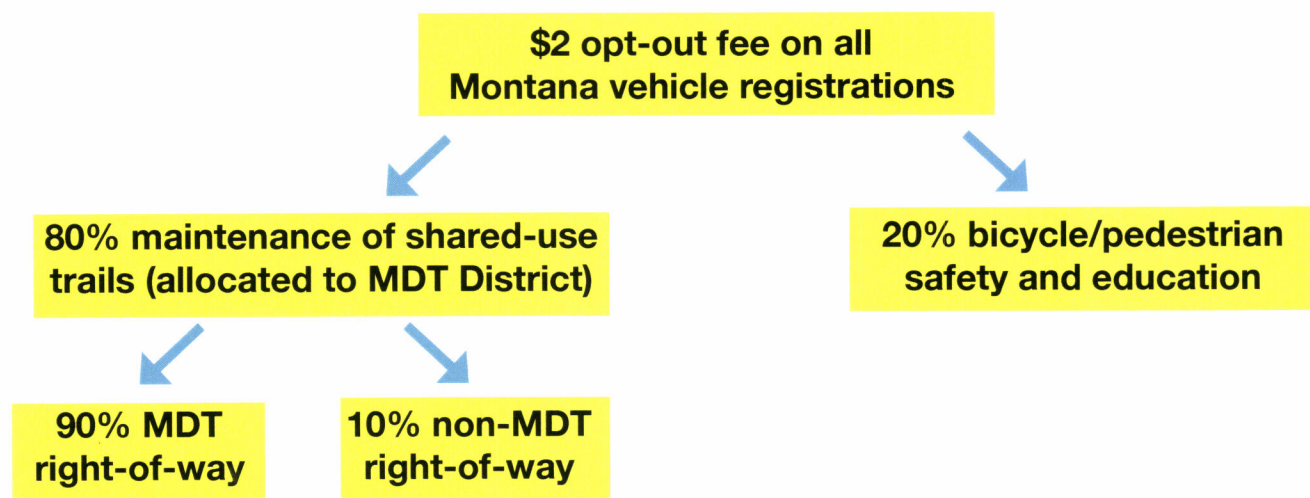


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HOW FUNDING WILL BE GENERATED AND ALLOCATED

This program would be funded by a \$2 opt-out fee on all Montana light-vehicle registrations. It is not a new tax: the “opt-out” fee is entirely voluntary. Of the funds generated, 20% will go toward bicycle and pedestrian education and 80% will be used for trail maintenance. From the trail maintenance fund, 90% will be allocated toward MDT right-of-way trails and 10% will be allocated toward non-MDT right-of-way trails. The maintenance funds will be distributed by the MDT district in which the revenue is generated (see map below).



MDT FINANCIAL DISTRICTS

